بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

(In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful)

AL-ISLAM

BY
THE LATE AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN
FOUNDER OF
THE WOKING MUSLIM MISSION,
ENGLAND

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AL-ISLAM

THE world had her creeds before Islam. They were mostly of one character. Prayers, hymns, ceremonials and offerings were their chief aim, while sacrifices propitiated the Divine anger. This made up the religion ; some added to it a few sermons and miracles while many saw their gods in their own low desires.[1]

THE MUSLIM THEORY OF RELIGION

Islam came with a new conception of religion. Al-Qur-án drew our attention to the universe, there to find the clue to the Religion of God. It disclosed a theory of life on lines compatible with things in Nature. The Book unravelled the human heart. It laid down a code whereby to work out our nature. It admitted certain modes of worship, emphasizing, the while, the all-essential fact, that the Glory of God lay in the edification of man. " It is not righteousness " it says, " that you turn your faces towards the East and West ; but righteousness is this, that one should believe in Allah, and the Last Day, and the angels and the Book and the Prophets ; and give away wealth out of love for Him, to the near of kin and orphans and the needy and the wayfarers and the beggars and for the captives ; and keep up prayer and give alms ; and the

1 Al-Qur-án, xxv. 43.

performers of their promises . . . and the patient in distress and in affliction and in time of conflict."[1]

The verse distinguishes between a formal and a practical piety; it sets forth the essence of religion, which is faith in God, and-good will towards man.

Islam saw man's true religion in human nature and its development. "Set up your face upright for religion in the right state—the nature made by Allah, in which He has made man—that is the right religion."[2] "Is it then other than Allah's religion they seek? and to Him submit whoever is in the heavens and the earth."[3]

The Book revealed that, like everything in Nature, man enters into this world with a pure and untainted nature, possessing the highest capacities with unlimited progress before him; capable also of sinking to be "the lowest of the low."[4] He can reach the goal, and avoid the abyss, if he receives proper guidance.

Our physical nature, like all organisms, grows unconsciously on prescribed lines, assimilating the useful and rejecting the baneful; a process impossible in the sphere of consciousness. We have freedom of choice, but we lack the constructive ability, to direct our judgment to the right path, which we possess on the

1 Al-Qur-án, ii. 177.
2 *Ibid.* xxx. 30.
3 *Ibid.* iii. 82.
4 *Ibid.* xcv. 4—6.

physical plane. In the human frame, material growth reaches its consummation; and we are born to build up the moral and spiritual structure on the right lines. This we can do only if our discretion becomes trained to walk aright, as is our physical nature in its frame of the body. For this we need laws of right and wrong, and a disciplinary course, the pursuit of which may evolve in us a capacity to follow those laws, *i.e.* the disposition of Islam, that means submission to laws.

Doctrinal Beliefs

The laws must come from our Creator—the Source of all the laws that move the universe, as Islam says, through agencies called angels. The law should come to us through personages themselves capable of observing it strictly, and of guiding us thereto.[1] It must affect this life and the hereafter, where we shall reap the fruits of our actions. These principles furnish a base for the doctrinal beliefs in Islam, which are seven—belief in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Prophets, the Hereafter, the Divine Measure of good and evil, *i.e.* the Law, and the Resurrection.

Al-Qur-án also recognizes Divine revelations to other people,[2] and enjoins belief in them: "Say: we believe in Allah and that revealed to us and to . . . Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and the tribes, and that given to Moses and to Jesus and to the prophets . . .;

1 Al-Qur-án, ii. 129. 2 *Ibid.* ii. 136.

we do not distinguish between any of them and to Him we submit."[1] We must observe their teachings; but for them we look only to Al-Qur-án: as God's other Books, so it says, became adulterated, and Al-Qur-án came to reproduce their teachings.

Man, as I said before, possesses capabilities for sublimation and degradation. On one side he clings[2] to earth, seeing that he comes out of clay.[3] He is an animal—nay, sometimes worse than that;[4] on the other he is the vicegerent of God on this earth;[5] he receives obeisance from angels,[6] and rises to the very borders of Divinity. If the former is his beginning, the latter is his goal. Al-Qur-án came to uplift man from animality to Divinity. It first refers to our physical growth in the womb, which in its seventh stage of evolution engenders "another creature."[7] This new creation is the human consciousness—the bed-rock of subsequent development. Islam does not take the soul as a different entity that descends from somewhere and mixes with the body. The soul, at its inception, lies concealed in the animal consciousness of man; it comes to the surface at a later stage; after which further developments make it perfect. Seven, too, are its evolutionary stages, as Al-Qur-án describes:—

Ammárah[8] . . The Commanding.

1 Al-Qur-án, iii. 83. 2 *Ibid.* vii. 176. 3 *Ibid.* xxiii. 12.
4 *Ibid.* vii. 179. 5 *Ibid.* ii. 30. 6 *Ibid.* ii. 34.
7 *Ibid.* xxiii. 12—14. 8 *Ibid.* xii. 53.

Lawwáma[1]	. The Self-accusing.
Mulhima[2]	. Inspired.
Mutma'inna[3]	. At rest.
Rádziah[4]	. Pleased with God.
Mardziyyah[5]	. Pleasing to God.
Kámilah[6]	. Perfected.

Islam uplifts Ammárah to Kámilah. Ammárah is the nascent condition of the soul, in the garb of bestial passions, when natural impulses predominate. These are uncontrollable, and tend to iniquity. The spirit makes its full exhibition in a baby, who seeks everything he sees, and claims it as his own, but remains always unsatisfied, like a brute that mouths upon everything when its appetite is excited. Millions of men stand on the border of animality. The property of others excites their cupidity, and darkens their minds. "They have hearts," Al-Qur-án says, "but they understand not,—have eyes and they see not,—have ears and they hear not; they are as cattle, nay, they are in worse error,"[7] "they cling to the earth and follow low desires."[8] They may claim civilization, but the animal in them is still unbridled. It pounces upon others' property, whether it be in the guise of a robber or of a conqueror. The dictates of the spirit at this stage are very exacting, hence its name Ammárah—

1 Al-Qur-án, lxxv. 2. 2 *Ibid.* xci. 8. 3 *Ibid.* lxxxix. 27.
4 *Ibid.* lxxxix. 28. 5 *Ibid.* lxxxix. 28. 6 *Ibid.* xci. 7.
7 *Ibid.* vii. 179. 8 *Ibid.* vii. 176.

the Commanding. It often inclines to evil, as Al-Qur-án says: "Most surely (man's) self is wont to command evil."[1]

This is the hardest stage to reform, so much so that many have become hopeless of human redemption. They say that sin is in man's nature. They are mistaken. They take the nature for the capacity that ought to remain suppressed. The first step of uplifting is everywhere the most difficult. But if everything beautiful in Nature grows usually out of something ugly, where then lies the impossibility in our case? To encourage such pessimists in religion, Al-Qur-án gave the gospel that man was well equipped to find the right path,[2] and capable of every moral progress.[3] Do we not observe within us certain signs of the above mentioned stages of the soul? A callous soul sometimes repents; becomes inspired to do good. There are certain duties which all men discharge willingly; we face hardships where we are interested. We could, therefore, if we would, soar higher in moral and spiritual realms.

Islam teaches that man is not the slave of evil. He can show the best of virtues, if he will but strive. We cannot put our burden on others,[4] as we have to evolve something out of ourselves. If an operation on

1 Al-Qur-án, xii. 53.
2 *Ibid.* xc. 7-10.
3 *Ibid.* xcv. 4, 6.
4 *Ibid.* xxxv. 18.

a surgeon's body, or his taking some medicine himself, cannot cure his patient, then others' action cannot raise us to our goal. Like other entities in Nature, we need some systematic course suitable to each stage of progress; some disciplinary measures to create in us a disposition to pursue it. Islam brings us both.

Five Pillars of Islam

We have diverse appetities, and need many things to satisfy them. Cupidity suggests evil, and consequent violation of the Law. But Islam, subjectively, is a disposition to obey Laws. It respects social order. To strengthen this disposition, Al-Qur-án prescribes a course of disciplinary measures, rightly called the Five Pillars of Islam:—The Formula of Faith—there is no object of adoration but Allah, and Muhammad is His Messenger; Prayers, Fasting, Poor Rate and Pilgrimage to Makka. Their observance lies in our partially parting with that which we rightly possess. The Book says: "By no means shall you attain to righteousness until you spend out what you love,"[1] such as time, occupation, food, drink, connubial companionship, wealth, family, business, friends, clothes. personal comforts, and above all, our various objects of adoration. These are our chief concerns, and cause the whole struggle in life. They move our criminal

1 Al-Qur-án, iii. 91.

tendencies if we are not scrupulously honest. But could we commit wrong in order to have them, if we learn to give them up willingly? The formula demands from us that we give up every object of adoration before Allah. In Prayer we part with our occupations; in Fasting with food, drink, and counubial relations; in Poor Rate with a portion of our wealth. Then comes the Pilgrimage. We leave our family, friends, business and country; we part with our clothes and comfort, covering ourselves only with two sheets; and when we enter Hedjaz, we must abstain from disputes, quarrels and evil language;[1] we observe strict fraternal relations with strangers, always proclaiming aloud our readiness to offer all that we possess to God. In the end we kill an animal. Till then we had practically forsaken everything pertaining to the cravings of the passions, and the demands of the animal within. That we crushed. If, therefore the last ceremony of the Pilgrimage consists in killing a brute, it rightly symbolizes the killing of the flesh. The Prophet remarked that the Pilgrimage is the top of the disciplinary measures in Islam. It washes out man's sin, if performed in the right spirit. He discards the flesh and frees the soul. He makes himself a true Muslim.

Rudimentary Reforms

Till now I have outlined Islam in general terms.

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1 Al-Qur-án, ii. 197.

Al-Qur-án came for universal reform. It takes every shade of humanity within its purview. First, I will sketch briefly its primary reforms.

Food plays a great part in moulding the human character. A sound mind creates sound morality, but only in a sound body. Al-Qur-án therefore forbids all such foods as injure the body, the mind and the soul. It forbids blood, and the flesh of the animals not bled to death, such as that, for example, which dies of itself, or by a fall or a blow, or is killed or eaten by beasts of prey; the flesh of swine or of any animal sacrificed to idols, or killed in a name other than that of God, is also forbidden.[1] "Eat and drink that which is good and clean,[2] but be not extravagant."[3] "Clean your clothes and every other thing[4] and purify yourself when unclean."[5] As to general manners, the Book says: Make room for others when you assemble and rise from your places when so asked.[6] Speak rightly[7] and gently, and lower your voices; look not upon others contemptuously; walk not exultingly, and pursue the right path.[8] Enter houses by their doors;[9] enter not into others' houses without permission; salute the inmates, but enter not if they are not in.[10] When saluted, salute the person with a better salutation or return the same.[11] Avoid wine, gambling

1 Al-Qur-án, v. 3. 2 *Ibid.* v. 4.
3 *Ibid.* vi. 142; vii. 31. 4 *Ibid.* lxxiv, 4, 5. 5 *Ibid.* v. 6.
6 *Ibid.* lviii. 11. 7 *Ibid.* xxxiii. 70. 8 *Ibid* xxxi. 18, 19.
9 *Ibid.* ii. 189. 10 *Ibid.* xxiv. 27, 28. 11 *Ibid.* iv. 86.

and idols. [1] Commit not suicide; [2] nor kill your children, [3] nor commit murder. [4] Do not fornicate, nor live with woman in secret intimacy.[5] Marry virtuous women[6] and give them their dowries.[7] Your mothers are forbidden to you in marriage, so are your daughters, sisters, aunts, nieces, foster-mothers, foster-sisters, step-daughters and daughter-in-law.[8]

Ordinances like these—and there are many more in Al-Qur-án—were given to raise man from the animal condition in which, indeed, Arabia stood at the appearance of the Holy Prophet.

Second Stage

But the most difficult task of man's reform begins when the initial stage is over. It consists in raising, in the human breast, *Lawwáma*—the upbraiding spirit—generally called conscience, and then bringing it to perfection, a stage which the greater part of mankind has yet to reach.

We are sociable by nature; considerations of the health of society compels us to respect its bounds. Knowledge, experience and wisdom ripened with the sufferings that accrue as the penalty for breaking social laws, create remorse in us. This means the rise of conscience. Our breasts become an arena of struggle. Temptations allure; conscience chides; we stumble.

1 Al-Qur-án, v. 90. 2 *Ibid.* iv. 29. 3 *Ibid.* vi. 152.
4 *Ibid.* xvii. 33. 5 *Ibid.* iv. 25. 6 *Ibid.* v. 5.
7 *Ibid.* v. 5. 8 *Ibid.* iv. 23.

But if we listen to the latter it strengthens us gradually to withstand the dictates of *Ammárah*—the animal within. We are anxious to know of right and wrong, and strive to avoid evil.

The passion of adoring the Deity is very strong in man. Whatever may be our conception of God, all our notions of good and righteousness become focused in Him. His pleasure and displeasure provide our moral basis. Whatever we think He loves becomes good, and whatever He hates is wickedness. We must do the former, and the latter we should avoid. Such ideas chiefly mould our conscience. Hence Al-Qur-án mentions certain things that God loves and other things that He abhors :—Allah does not love exceeding limits,[1] mischief-making,[2] ungratefulness,[3] injustice,[4] pride,[5] boasting,[6] treachery[7] utterances of hurtful language,[8] extravagance,[9] unfaithfulness[10] exulting,[11] etc. God loves those who do good,[12] judge equitably,[13] purify themselves,[14] repent and return to God, trust in Him,[15] act righteously,[16] and speak truthfully. The Divine curse, that in Islam means remoteness from God, comes on man for unbelief,[17] belief in enchantment magic and superstition,[18] polytheism,[19] hypocrisy[20] turning from the right path,[21] breaking covenants and

1 Al-Qur-án, ii. 190. 2 *Ibid.* v. 64. 3 *Ibid.* ii. 276.
4 *Ibid.* iii. 56. 5 *Ibid.* xvi. 23. 6 *Ibid.* iv. 36.
7 *Ibid.* iv. 107. 8 *Ibid.* iv. 148. 9 *Ibid.* vi. 142.
10 *Ibid.* xxii. 38. 11 *Ibid.* xxviii. 76. 12 *Ibid.* ii. 195.
13 *Ibid.* v. 42. 14 *Ibid.* ix. 108. 15 *Ibid.* iii. 158.
16 *Ibid.* iii. 75. 17 *Ibid.* xxxiii. 64. 18 *Ibid.* iv. 51. 52.
19 *Ibid.* xlviii. 6. 20 *Ibid.* ix. 68. 21 *Ibid.* xlvii. 25.

promises,[1] concealing truth,[2] disputing truth,[3] falsehood,[4] speaking evil of God and His apostles,[5] and murder.[6]

These various virtues and vices have not been jumbled together in a page or a chapter, nor has Al-Qur-án given them as a set homily, with accents of blessing and cursing ; they have been spoken of in many different ways—sometimes in connection with human nature, when Al-Qur-án speaks of its beauties and ulcers, sometimes when narrating some events of the life of the people of old who were successful, or failed, in consequence of these virtues and vices.

Al-Qur-án explains them fully, giving their characteristics. It creates in us the spirit that reproves evil and approves righteousness. The upbraiding soul thus becomes strong and establishes itself. Al-Qur-án warns us also against certain mentalities that harden men's minds up to the stage of callousness, when "Allah sets His seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing and there is a covering over their eyes."[7] In them, conscience dies ; progress terminates, and we become the lowest of the low.

(1) Indifference—"Surely those who disbelieve—they will not believe."[8]

1 Al-Qur-án, v. 13. 2 *Ibid.* ii. 79. 3 *Ibid.* iii. 60.
4 *Ibid.* xxiv. 7. 5 *Ibid.* xxxiii. 57. 6 *Ibid.* iv. 93; xvii. 33
7 *Ibid.* ii. 7 8 *Ibid.* ii. 6.

it being alike to them whether you warn them or not—

(2) Hypocrisy—"And there are those who say: We believe; and they are not at all believers."[1]

(3) Two-sidedness—"When it is said to them, Do not make mischief . . . they say: We are but peacemakers."[2]

(4) Conceit—"When it is said to them, Believe as others believe, they say: Shall we believe as the fools believe?"[3]

(5) Fear—"When they meet believers, they say: We believe; and when they are alone with their devils, they say: Surely we are with you, we are only mocking."[4]

(6) Indecision—"Wavering between that (and this), (belonging) neither to these nor to those."[5]

(7) Attachment to hereditary wrong beliefs—"That on which we find our fathers is sufficient for us."[6]

Conscience becomes strong under these directions if we follow them, and so we enter into the sphere of moral order.

The concluding portion of the Qur-ánic quotations dealing with rudimentary reforms, spoke of marriage—

1 Al-Qur-án, ii. 8. 2 *Ibid.* ii. 11. 3 *Ibid.* i. 13.
4 *Ibid.* ii. 14. 5 *Ibid.* iv. 143. 6 *Ibid.* v. 104; vii. 28.

an institution so necessary for the uplifting of humanity.

We cannot reach the goal without cultivating the habit of doing for others as we do for ourselves.

It demands enlargement of consciousness. The animal consciousness, though very limited in its scope, —so much so that its first development into Mother-consciousness, at the birth of offspring, dies very soon after the young become capable of looking after themselves,—can expand widely when it appears in the human frame. Muslim Divines speak of seven stages of its growth : Animal, Individual, Parental, Tribal, Racial, of the Species, and Cosmic. In fact, the evolution of the soul follows the development of consciousness. Animal consciousness in us takes little time to sublimate into individual consciousness. We are sociable ; society cannot proceed unless individual rights are respected, which means the cultivation of individual consciousness. If I feel for my rights, I must feel also for others' rights. This mentality springs from necessity. But to go further is very hard. There we have to leave our cherished possessions for others. It means sacrifice. It is uphill work.[1] People speak of love ; but love is sacrifice. Higher morality springs out of selflessness, which comes into practice, in its natural course, in marriage. Marriage joins the two souls ; they soon begin to live and feel for each other ; children are born

1 Al-Qur-án, xc. 12.

and intensify the sacrificial spirit. We work hard and let our savings go to them. Self-seeking tendencies become weakened. Marriage brings also other relatives and friends in touch with us ; we begin to feel for them. Our consciousness now crosses the walls of family, and we find the fourth stage,—that of Tribal-consciousness. It, in its turn, engenders Race-consciousness, which, if cultivated on broader charitable lines, creates consciousness of the Species, and Cosmic consciousness. Then we feel for every man, and for every other creature, as we do for ourselves. Our consciousness reaches its sublimity, and our soul is soon fully fledged. Love and compassion are at the root of all. Their seed is in our nature, but its nursery is the married life ; as Al-Qur-án says : "God created mates for you, and puts between you love and compassion."[1] This is the object of marriage in Islam.

True love and compassion grow naturally under the family roof. Al-Qur-án refers to it in another verse—a verse that is read from the pulpit to the whole Muslim world on each Friday : "God enjoins upon you justice, beneficence, and that which you do to your family folk."[2]

Justice brings social order to perfection and moves individual consciousness in the right way, but further progress depends upon doing to others as we do to our

1 Al-Qur-án, xxx. 21. 2 *Ibid.* xvi. 90.

families. How finely the verse sums up the whole of morality. Do the same to all creatures of God that you do to your kindred, and you will raise Mother-consciousness to Divine-consciousness. For this reason the Prophet declared: "Marriage is of my ways; he who goes against my ways is not from me." But marriage cannot serve its purpose unless the position of the woman is raised and domestic ethics improved.

History is too eloquent on the subject for there to be any need for me to show the degraded condition in which Islam found women. Al-Qur-án really raised her up to man's level when it said: "O people, fear your Lord who created you from a single being, created its mate of the same essence."[1] "They are your garments and you are their garments;[2] to them is due what is due from them."[3] The Prophet said: "Women are men's twin-halves; the most valuable thing.....is a virtuous woman; God enjoins to treat women well, for they are their mothers, daughters and aunts; female rights are sacred; see that women are maintained in their rights."

Before Islam, some thought that woman was without a human soul and too unclean to enter into sacred places. Al-Qur-án gave the lie to such a conception, and declared that woman was equal to man, both in moral and in spiritual advancement. Al-Qur-án

1 Al-Qur-án, iv. 1. 2 *Ibid.* ii. 187. 3 *Ibid.* ii. 228.

acknowledged her admission to paradise—the final abode for the soul; and in the following speaks equally of both: "Surely the men who submit and the women who submit, the believing men and the believing women, the obeying men and the obeying women, the truthful men and the truthful women, the patient men and the patient women, the humble men and the humble women, the almsgiving men and the almsgiving women, the fasting men and the fasting women, the chaste men and the chaste women, the men who remember Allah and the women who remember Allah; He has prepared for them forgiveness and mighty reward."[1]

As to domestic morals, which alone can improve ethics in general, Muhammad says: "He is the most perfect Muslim whose disposition is most liked by his own family. The best of you are those who are best to their wives; the thing which is lawful but disliked by God, is divorce. A virtuous wife is man's best treasure. Do not prevent your women from coming to the mosque. Admoish your wife with kindness. A Muslim must not hate his wife; if he be displeased with one bad quality in her, let him be pleased with another one which is good. Give your wife to eat when you eat, clothe her when you clothe yourself; abuse her not; nor separate yourself from her in displeasure. Do not beat her. If a woman undertakes more than one day's journey, her male relative should accompany her."

1 Al-Qur-án, xxxiii. 35.

Islam gives ample teachings to carry us further up to Cosmic-consciousness, but here I can only give a very brief extract from Al-Qur-án and quote but a few of the sayings of the Prophet.

We are commanded goodness to parents, in gratitude for all they did for us when we were small,[1] especially to the mother who bore us "with fainting upon fainting,"[2] and gave us milk for "two years"[2]; we should be compassionate and gentle to them; when they reach old age, speak to them generously, never chide them, nor say to them even "Ugh," and leave them gently when going in pursuit of our calling.[3]

The Prophet says: "It is pity that young persons may lose paradise by not serving old parents; paradise lies at a mother's feet. Allah's pleasure is in a father's pleasure; His displeasure in a father's displeasure."

After our parents, we should do good to our kinsmen, the orphans, the needy, the kindred, neighbour, the alien-neighbour, the fellow-passenger, the wayfarers, servants, political prisoners;[4] and liberate the slaves,[5] and feed the poor, the orphans, the captive[6] and those "in hunger" or "lying in the dust."[7] All this out of love for Allah, neither desiring reward nor thanks, nor taking pride nor boasting.[8]

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1 Al-Qur-án, xvii. 24. 2 *Ibid.* xxxi. 14.
3 *Ibid.* xvii. 28. 4 *Ibid.* iv. 36. 5 *Ibid.* xc. 13.
6 *Ibid.* lxxvi. 8. 7 *Ibid.* xc. 15, 16. 8 *Ibid.* lxxvi. 7, 9.

The Prophet says: "Do you love your Creator? Love your fellow-beings first. One who takes charge of the orphans will be with me on the day of Requital. Look after widows; he is not of us who is not affectionate to his children and reveres not the old. To cheer up the weary, to remove the sufferings of the afflicted, will have their rewards. He who helps his fellow-creatures in need, and helps the oppressed, him will God help in difficulty. He is the most favoured of God from whom the greatest good cometh to His creatures. He who removes his brother's want, God will forgive his sin. All God's creatures are a family; he who does most good to God's creatures is His most beloved. Seek for God's good-will in that of the poor and indigent. Avert Allah's wrath with charity. They will enter paradise who have a true, pure and merciful heart. O Ayisha, do not turn away the poor without giving something, be it but half a date."

Islam laid great stress on charity, because charity cultivates the sacrificial spirit. Sacrifice is the mainspring of all moral qualities. Al-Qur-án divides them under two headings. First, those that prevent us from injuring others' life, property and honour; and chief among these are CHASTITY, HONESTY, MEEKNESS and POLITENESS. Secondly, those that prompt us to do good to others. Among these are FORGIVENESS, GOODNESS, COURAGE, TRUTHFULNESS, PATIENCE, SYMPATHY and KINDNESS.

Al-Qur-án does not read any vague sermon on them. It defines them and shows the right occasions for their use. Sentiments and deeds, in themselves, are neither good nor bad. It is the propriety of the occasion that gives them the dignity of morality. Again, circumstances change their character. Forgiveness to incorrigible offenders is tyranny. Charity misplaced is extravagance. Man needed some enlightenment on this aspect of charity, which Al-Qur-án supplied.

I quote here some verses that help to cultivate these morals.

Chastity.

"Say to the believing men that they cast down their looks when they see strange women, and observe continence. Say to the believing women that they refrain from casting their looks upon strange men, and display not the decorated parts of their body except those external. Let them wear head-covers over their bosoms; and let them not strike their feet.....and turn to Allah for protection from stumbling.[1] Draw not near unto fornication (keep aloof even from its chanas), for it is indecency and it is an evil. Let those who cannot find means to marry, keep chaste (and employ other means to preserve continence).[2] As for monkery, they invented it—We did not prescribe it to them—only to seek Allah's pleasure; but they did not observe it with its due observances."[3]

1 Al-Qur-án, xxiv. 31. 2 *Ibid.* xxiv. 33. 3 *Ibid.* lvi. 27.

Honesty.

"Control the property of those among you who are intellectually weak; do not give away what God has placed with you, but maintain them out of profit of it.....and speak to them words of honest advice."

"Test the orphans until they attain puberty; if you find them matured in intellect, give them their property, and consume it not extravagantly . . .; whoever is rich let him abstain altogether, and whoever is poor, let him eat reasonably, then when you make over to them their property, call witnesses in their presence."[1]

"Those who swallow the property of the orphans . . . they only swallow fire into their belly, and they shall enter burning fire.[2] Do not consume each other's wealth unjustly, nor offer it to judges as a bribe, so that you may seize others' property dishonestly;[3] verily God orders you to give back your trusts to their owners.[4] He does not love the treacherous.[5] Measure rightly, weigh with exact balance; defraud not men of their substance; nor tread the earth with criminal intention.[6] Do not give worthless things for good ones."[7]

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1 Al-Qur-án, iv. 6
2 *Ibid.* iv. 10.
3 *Ibid.* ii. 188.
4 *Ibid.* iv. 58.
5 *Ibid.* iv. 107.
6 *Ibid.* xxvi. 181-3.
7 *Ibid.* iv. 2.

Meekness.

"Live peacefully.[1] . . . There is much good in peace;[2] if they incline to peace, do thou also incline to it.[3] Servants of the Merciful are those upon earth[4] . . . who walk meekly. When they hear frivolous discourse they pass on with dignity.[5] Do not pick quarrels on trifling matters. Turn (away vain, vexatious words and deeds) with something better; the person between whom and thyself there was enmity, shall become as it were thy warmest friend."[6]

Politeness.

"Speak to men good words.[7] Let not men laugh other men to scorn, who perchance may be better than themselves; neither let women laugh other women to scorn; defame not others, nor call one another by nicknames. Avoid especially suspicion; suspicion sometimes is a sin; neither backbite others.[8] Accuse not others unknowingly; verily the hearing, the sight and the heart shall be called to account for this."[9]

Forgiveness.

Forgiveness is first among those qualities which we exercise for doing good to others. Instead of seeing offenders punished we forgive them. Islam does not recommend unconditional pardon, or non-resistance to

1 Al-Qur-án, viii. 1. 2 *Ibid* iv. 128. 3 *Ibid.* viii. 61.
4 *Ibid* xxv. 63. 5 *Ibid.* xxv. 72. 6 *Ibid.* xli. 34.
7 *Ibid.* ii. 235. 8 *Ibid.* xlix. 11, 12. 9 *Ibid.* xvii. 36.

evil on each occasion. Reclamation and mending are its chief aim. If they cannot be attained without harsh measures, it allows them. "The recompense of evil is evil proportionate thereto, but if a person forgives and amends thereby, he shall have his reward from Allah."[1]

But in the case of evil coming from our inferiors, the Book not only recommends forgiveness, but the showing of liberality to them, provided it may bring reclamation. "They are the doers of good," it says, "who master their anger and do good to them."[2] Al-Qur-án does not recognize every manifestation of pardon as a high morality. Harmlessness, or inability to revenge a wrong, is not forgiveness. If only non-recompense of evil meant forgiveness, many of the lower animals show it. The cow, the lamb and other animals may be described as meek. But that quality can properly be claimed only by those who show mercy when others stand at their mercy ; who suppress anger and vengeance, when they have power to wreak it. Al-Qur-án does not allow forgiveness if it leads to evil consequences.

Goodness.

"God commands to do good for good, and to do good without recompense and in the way we do good to our kindred ; God forbids exceeding the limit of

1 Al-Qur-án, xlii. 40. 2 *Ibid.* iii. 133.

justice and doing good on wrong occasions."[1] Though Al-Qur-án speaks highly of charity, it nevertheless places some restraints on its exercise. It disallows charity to the extent that it may impoverish its doers, nor does it allow charity proceeding from evil sources: "And when they spend, they are neither extravagant nor niggard and keep the mean."[2] Bestow alms from the good things you have already acquired; do not aim at what is bad that you may spend it (in alms).[3] Make not your charity worthless by laying obligations upon those you have relieved, or by injury and reproach.[4] The servants of God feed the poor, the orphans, the bondsmen, and say, We do so to please God; we seek not recompense nor thanks.[5] They give alms in prosperity and in straitness,[6] secretly and openly.[7] Al-Qur-án names also the persons to whom alms should go: "The poor, the needy, the collectors or distributors of alms, the new-comers in Faith when in need, the captives, those in debt or in trouble, those furthering God's cause, the wayfarer."[8]

Courage.

Courage should not be confused with the fearlessness of a soldier or of a hunter who is habituated to danger. True courage can be displayed only in redress of wrong. "The truly brave are those who stand firm

1 Al-Qur-án, xvi. 90. 2 *Ibid* xxv. 67.
3 *Ibid.* ii, 267. 4 *Ibid.* ii. 263. 5 *Ibid.* lxxvi. 8, 9.
6 *Ibid.* iii. 133. 7 *Ibid.* xiii, 22. 8 *Ibid.* ix. 60.

and behave patiently under ills and hardship ;[1] their patience is only for God, and not to display bravery.[2] When men gather against them and frighten them, this increases their faith ; they say, Allah is sufficient for us, and is the excellent Protector.[3] Be not like those who march from their houses insolently, and to be seen of others, and turn away from God's way."[4]

True courage does not lie in the insolent ostentation of bravery, but in patience and steadfastness in resisting passions, and standing fearlessly to support good and avert evil. It is not the daring dash of a savage, but the unbreakable courage of a virtuous man.

Truthfulness.

Abstaining from falsehood is good, but it is not a moral quality if it incurs no risk. It becomes high morality if we stick to truth when life, property or honour, is in danger.

"Shun ye the pollution of idols, and shun ye falsehood."[5] "They shall not refuse to present themselves when summoned; and conceal not true testimony, for he who conceals it has a wicked heart.[6] When you speak, be true and just, though the person concerned be your kinsman. Stand fast to truth and justice for Allah's sake, though it may be against your self or parents or near relative, be he rich or poor.[7]

1 Al-Qur-án, ii. 177. 2 *Ibid.* xiii. 22. 3 *Ibid.* iii. 172.
4 *Ibid.* viii. 47. 5 *Ibid.* xxii. 30. 6 *Ibid.* ii. 282. 7 *Ibid.* iv. 135.

Be upright for Allah; let not hatred of a nation incite you to act inequitably.[1] The men of truth and women of truth have a rich reward.[2] They enjoin truth and steadfastness upon each other."[3]

Patience.

None of us is without troubles; we have to taste sorrows and sufferings and submit to misfortunes. But it is only when the loss is suffered with total resignation to God, that patience becomes a moral virtue. "O you who believe! seek assistance through patience and prayer;[4] surely Allah is with the patient. We will certainly try you with somewhat of fear, hunger, loss of property, lives and fruits. Give good news to the patient who, when misfortune comes, say, Surely we are for Allah; to Him we shall return."[5]

Sympathy.

We labour under a wrong notion of sympathy. Race and colour prejudices prompt us to wrong others in the interests of our own people. We exercise our patriotic spirit in the same way. This psychology arises from natural impulses, witnessed even among the lower animals. A raven's call brings thousands of other ravens together against their foes. Al-Qur-ánic injunctions on the subject are very useful. "Sympathize and co-operate in good and pious matters and

1 Al-Qur-án, v. 8. 2 *Ibid.* xxxiii. 35. 3 *Ibid.* ciii. 3.
4 *Ibid.* ii. 153. 5 *Ibid.* ii. 153, 155, 156, 157.

do not co-operate for evil and malice.[1] Slacken not in your zeal for the sympathy of your people. Do not advocate the fraudulent, nor plead for those who defraud one another."[2]

Divine Revelation.

Virtue for virtue's sake is undoubtedly a great consolation, a strong incentive for leading a moral life ; but strength to face hardships in the cause of righteousness comes only to those whose belief in God's existence reaches the stage of certainty, *i.e.* to whom God appears and speaks as He did to them of old time. Islam promises this : " Those who strive for Us, We will certainly guide them to Our ways."[3]

These moralities, when observed properly, enable us to receive the Divine Revelation. First, angels begin to invite us to good actions and take us under their care. Do we not feel sometimes inclined to do good voluntarily and shun evils, as if inspired by some unseen agencies ? The inspiration comes from angels. " God sends down angels with inspiration on whom He pleases.[4] . . ." The angels become encouraged if we follow them. They become our guardians ; we receive Divine Revelations through them from time to time. " As for those who say, Our Lord is Allah, then continue in the right way, the angels descend upon them,

1 Al-Qur-án. v. 2.
2 *Ibid.* iv. 104, 105, 107.
3 *Ibid.* xxix, 69.
4 *Ibid* xvi. 2.

saying : Fear not, nor be grieved ; receive good news of the garden you were promised. We are your guardians in this life and the hereafter ; you shall have therein what your soul desires."[1]

This is the third stage of our uplifting, called *Mulhima*—the Inspired. This brings the soul on its road to perfection.[2] The Divine flame from within kindles and consumes all dross. We walk in its light ; Allah listens to our cries and answers our prayers by the words of His own mouth. "Call upon Me," God says, "and I will answer your prayers."[3] "If My servants ask thee concerning Me, tell them that I am very near to them ; I listen to the supplications of the supplicator ; seek Me with prayers, and believe in Me, so that they may proceed rightly.[4] The assurance coming in some tangible form, we feel in God's company and become steadfast in the hardest ordeals. Temptations die and cravings for virtue increase ; struggles are passed and won, and the soul begins to rule the flesh.

It is the fourth stage of the spiritual progress ; carnal desires come within proper bounds ; evil disappears, and virtue becomes man's food. "O believers ! God endeared the faith to you and impressed its beauty and excellence upon your hearts. He made unbelief and wickedness and disobedience hateful

1 Al-Qur-án, xli. 30. 31.
2 *Ibid.* xci. 7, 9.
3 *Ibid.* xl. 60.
4 *Ibid.* ii. 186.

to you and made your heart averse to evil."[1] "Truth came and falsehood fled; verily falsehood had to flee."[2] Man forgets himself in God's love; his life is solely for the Master.[3] He steps automatically on the right path. "Yes, whoever submits entirely to Allah and is the doer of good, he has his reward from his Lord; he shall have no fear nor shall he grieve."[4]

Here we pass from the moral into the spiritual order. The passion of Mine and Thine dies; we hold our acquisitions as a trust for others.[5] With no race or colour or family distinction, we live for God and His creatures. The lover of God sacrifices his life in His way and receives His pleasure as his price.[6] In the hardest afflictions they look to God, saying: "O Lord! give us in this affliction contentment of mind that may give us patience, and our death be upon Islam (i.e. total resignation to God)." And God says: "For them are good tidings in this world and in the hereafter."[7]

These are the fifth and sixth evolutionary stages of our soul. We reach the door of heaven on this very earth: "Thou soul at rest, return to thy Lord, pleased with Him and He pleased with thee; enter among My servants and enter into My paradise." Ponder over these words. They explain the Muslim paradise; service of God is paradise.

1 Al-Qur-án, xlix. 7, 8.
2 *Ibid.* xvii. 81.
3 *Ibid.* ix. 24.
4 *Ibid.* ii. 112.
5 *Ibid.* xxxiii. 72.
6 *Ibid.* vi. 163.
7 *Ibid.* x. 64.

At this stage man becomes a willing instrument in God's hands. He merges in Him and subordinates his judgment to His will, and says, as Muhammad said: "My prayers and my sacrifices, my life and my death are for Allah, the Lord of the Worlds."[1] Here God becomes his limbs and joints, as Al-Qur-án speaks of Muhammad: "The hand of the Prophet, which is above their hands, is the hand of God."[2] "Whatever thou castest, not thou, but God, has cast."[3] God becomes closer to us than our neck-vein.[4] "He engraves faith on our heart with His own hands and strengthens us with His Holy Spirit."[5] Man's soul reaches its zenith. The spirit of Allah breathed in man, as the perfection of his physical frame [6] comes to prominence. We reach the final stage, and the angels of God—the movers of the forces of Nature—fall prostrate to our will.[7]

People of the present day speculate about occult powers and hanker after abnormal achievements. Should these things be worthy of the notice of a Muslim who reaches this stage? He becomes equipped with Divine morals, and reproduces God's attributes within human walls. Could we go farther, if God becomes our limbs and joints? The world has produced such men, but some of the them were mistaken for God. They were iron in the fire, exuding heat and light, but resuming a normal condition when out of it.

1 Al-Qur-án, vi. 162. 2 *Ibid.* xlviii. 10.
3 *Ibid.* viii. 17. 4 *Ibid.* l. 16. 5 *Ibid.* lviii. 22.
6 *Ibid.* xv. 29. 7 *Ibid.* ii. 34. 7.

They showed Divine colours, but exhibited human infirmities. They did not possess two natures—Divine and human—but only one human nature sometimes at its highest, and sometimes normal.

Imagine the condition when all struggles are over; all low passions—avarice, envy, rivalry, vanity, vengeance, vanished, every desire of the soul achieved; life a perennal spring, flowing with high moralities—chastity, honesty, meekness, patience, constancy, truthfulness, forgiveness, benevolence, sympathy and kindness to all creatures; man standing in full beatitude, as if in the presence of Allah.

Could there be a better conception of a blissful life? This is the Muslim paradise that opens in this life, while these very moral and spiritual conditions will become, after death, materialized in a form known only to God,[1] to make us a heaven there. The paradise will be an embodiment of the spiritual blessings which advanced souls begin to enjoy here. Al-Qur-án says (to those lost in His love): "The Lord has given a drink that purified their hearts: They drink of a fountain which they opened with their own hands."[2] Their own goods will in that life assume the form of trees that will give unceasing fruits. To such a life men and women will have equal entry. "The dwellers of the gardens shall be on that day in happy occupation;

1 Al-Qur-án, xxxii. 17. 2 *Ibid.* lxxvi. 21, 22.

they and their wives reclining in shade on raised couches; they shall have fruits and whatever they desire; Peace—a word from the merciful Lord.[1] ..... The angels will enter in upon them, from every gate; peace be upon you because you were constant.[2] ..... And We will remove whatever of ill-feeling is in their breasts.[3] ..... Their cry therein shall be, Glory to Thee, O Allah; and their greetings in it shall be Peace, and their last cry shall be, Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds."[4] Other verses similarly show that perfect peace shall be the ruling order in the Muslim paradise, and its blessings purely of a spiritual nature. "And they shall say: All praise to Allah, Who made grief to depart from us.....Who made us alight in a house abiding for ever.....toil shall not touch us therein nor shall fatigue afflict us.[5] ..... Well pleased because of their own striving, in lofty gardens wherein you shall not hear vain talk."[6]

Freedom from grief, fear, toil, and anxiety is the chief characteristic of Al-Qur-ánic paradise—a truth repeated again and again in Al-Qurán. Could the idea of the spiritual paradise be better expressed? Undoubtedly Al-Qur-án speaks of gardens, trees, milk, honey, fruits and numerous other things; but these are not of this life; they are metaphorical expressions.

1 Al-Qur-án, xxxvi.58.
2 *Ibid.* xiii. 23, 24.
3 *Ibid.* vii. 43.
4 *Ibid.* x 10.
5 *Ibid.* xxxv. 34, 35.
6 *Ibid.* lxxxviii. 9—11.

Al-Qur-án is too eloquent on the point to leave any doubt : " A parable of the garden, which the righteous are promised ; therein are rivers of water that do not alter . . . and rivers of milk . . . the rivers of honey . . . fruits.[1] . . ." Other verses say the same[2] ; that all this is an allegory ; and for obvious reasons. If heavenly blessings are such, as the Prophet says, "as no eyes have seen, nor has ear heard, nor has it entered into man's heart to conceive them," they can only be conveyed by parables and examples.

The Houris, upon whom so much stress is laid by our adverse critics, are no other than our own female folks, with hearts pure and eyes restrained from evil. Al-Qur-án says : "The garden of perpetual abode which they will enter along with those who do good from among their spouses and their offspring."[3]

The root of the word *Houri* means white, pure, unsullied. We read undoubtedly of the beauty of their eyes, but their very description [4] —" Those who restrain the eyes "—refers more to their spiritual beauty than to anything of the flesh. The eyes restrained from evil means purity of heart. It is our heart, under Qur-ánic teachings, that creates heaven and hell : "The day on which property will not avail, nor sons, except who comes to Allah with a *heart* free from evil." [5] Speaking of hell, Al-Qur-án says : "It is the fire kindled by

1 Al-Qur-án, xlvii. 15. 2 *Ibid.* xiii. 35. 3 *Ibid.* xiii. 23.
4 Al-Qur-án, xxxvii. 48. 5 *Ibid.* xxvi. 89.

Allah which rises above *the hearts.*"[1]

Besides, only those born here will be admitted to that life, with no further procreation therein. Heavenly life is simply a starting-point for further progress of a different character. "Their light shall run before them and on their right hands; they shall say: Our Lord! make perfect for us our light."[2] The prayer is really a desire for perfection. Every stage of excellence to which man shall attain shall seem to be imperfect when compared with the next stage of progress. The seven heavens of Al-Qur-án are seven evolutionary stages, but that is not the termination. The last heaven will be another starting-point for advancement till we merge into the Divine Essence. Here we also make great progress; but it is a life of preparation for us, to traverse immeasurably wider realms opening at our death, when the soul will become freed from physical limitations. "They shall have high places, above them higher places. They shall have reward never to be cut."[3] The Qur-ánic paradise is not within certain frontiers. "Hasten to a garden the extensiveness of which is as the extensiveness of heaven and earth." The Prophet, when asked, "if paradise be so extensive, where will be the hell?" remarked: "Allah be glorified, where is the night when the day comes?" This explains conclusively that the Muslim Heaven and Hell are two conditions of life after death,

1 Al-Qur-án, civ. 5-7.
2 *Ibid.* lxvi. 8.
3 *Ibid.* xxix. 20; xcv. 6.
4 *Ibid.* lvii. 21; iii. 132.

and not two places. Here we utilize mostly terrestrial things for our growth, but there our material will be something from the whole universe, but much finer than earth. A heart free from evil will move freely in heaven and on earth, but the wicked will become crippled. He will be subjected to a course of treatment to remove the spiritual poison that he himself created in his system, [1] that stunted his faculties; but when it shall have become counteracted, and he be fit to start on the onward journey to the goal, he will be no more in hell. Islam does not speak of any eternal condemnation, nor does it close the door of paradise on any human being. Hell is meant to cleanse men of the dross that hindered their spiritual progress; and when that object is gained, its necessity finishes. If fire is a good cleansing factor, Al-Qur-án is only consistent with its claimed explicitness, if it uses the metaphor of fire when describing hell. It will automatically become cold, when every soul shall have become purged of its impurities; and the day will come on hell, as the noble Prophet said when, cool breezes will blow in its avenues. This is the Muslim conception of hell which, even in this life, burns in an evil heart.

Material Progress.

As to our material progress I have as yet said nothing. The conditions obtaining chiefly in the West,

1 Al-Qur-án, xci. 10.

led me to dwell mostly on the moral and spiritual beauties of Islam. Al-Qur-án, however, promulgated the best of ethics for producing material civilization. The short space at my disposal compels me to be brief.

To begin with, Al-Qur-án declared that man was not only God's Image but His vicegerent on the earth who, through acquiring the necessary knowledge, can receive homage from angels;[1] those sentient beings who, as the Book says, move forces of Nature and actualize her potentialities. The Book then defines man's relations with the rest of the universe. It preaches the equality of man in every human attainment.[2] It declares that everyone could do what his superiors do. It demolishes all man-made barriers such as descent, race, colour and wealth. It makes righteousness the only criterion of greatness.[3] Thus Islam brought to man for the first time the best form of democracy in all its ramifications. As to government, Umar, the second Caliph, remarked that it was no Government if the voice of the governed was not heard. State property was made public property by him, in every sense of the word. Every child received its stipend up to a certain age. Islam also introduced Socialism on workable lines. Every Muslim is ordered to contribute annually $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of what he owns, to help the poor. For the rest, man's charitable nature has been moved to part voluntarily with that which Western

1 Al-Qur-án, ii. 34. 2 *Ibid.* xviii. 110. 3 *Ibid.* xlix. 13.

Socialism demands that the State shall exact from the rich to benefit the poor, and it has proved more efficacious than the other is likely to prove. Islam honoured labour. It sanctified honest living, however humble, and denounced mendicancy. It abolished usury and encouraged trade.[1] It denounced sedition[2] and secret societies.[3] It preached the maintenance of the *status quo*, if just and equitable.

But the greatest boon that Islam conferred on humanity was the unique stimulus it gave to learning. Soon after Islam the world saw an upheaval, as it were, of material sciences unknown before. They did not, for obvious reasons, appeal much to pre-Islamic people, to whom Nature and her elements were the chief gods. Such, then, it would be sacrilege to reduce to service; nevertheless Islam came and brought them to the dust when it declared that everything in heaven and earth —the sun, the moon, the stars, the rivers, the ships, the ocean, the trees and so forth, were made subservient to man.[4] Man soon realized that his gods were his servants. He began to think of utilizing them, and brought material sciences into existence. In order, however, to draw his attention to scientific research, Al-Qur-án said: "Men of understanding . . . reflect on the creation of (that in) heaven and earth . . . (and say): Our Lord, Thou hast not created this in vain.

1 Al-Qur-án, ii. 275.
2 *Ibid* xvi. 90.
3 *Ibid.* lviii. 10.
4 *Ibid.* xiv. 32, 33.

Glory be to Thee!"[1] Thus the Book revealed that everything in Nature had its use for man, who must ponder over it and realize that to glorify God was not mere lip-gratitude, but rather consisted, first in discovering the properties of things, and then in giving thanks to Him, on finding our needs supplied by them. Science cannot reach the height suggested by Islam unless the whole solar system is reduced to our service. Is it, then, a matter of wonderment, if the early Muslims became the forerunners of the workers in modern sciences, that brought forth modern civilization?

In short, the equaliy of man and subservience of Nature are the two motor levers of Civilization. Al-Qur-án taught them to man clearly for the first time. In fact, they are the natural sequel of our belief in the Oneness of God. But if Islam preached monotheism in the purest form, it was rather to create in us self-reliance and independence of character than for anything in the way of extolling the Divine Majesty. Allah[2] does not lose anything if man becomes polytheist, nor is He a jealous God. Man is himself the loser in worshipping other than God, for in doing so, he kills all his high-soaring faculties. But for this, he could have done the same things which have, in his estimation, deified some evolved personality. Al-Qur-án first bids us look only to Allah for help. It also

1 Al-Qur-án, iii. 190.

2 *Ibid.* xxxi. 12.

declares that no intermediary stands between Him and man,[1] nor shall any intercession prevail before the Majesty of Allah ; and then as to Allah Himself we are told : " Allah does not change the condition of the people until they change their own condition.[2] . . ." Of our own exertions we are told, " For (every soul) is what it has earned and upon it is (the evil of what) it has wrought."[3] " He who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it."[4] We, however, are assured that our good actions will be rewarded tenfold or more, but that the first move must come from us. Could there be a better lesson for self-help, a better encouragement for self-exertion and a sterner warning against doing wrong ?

There was another drawback which retarded civilization, and which Islam removed. Man's view of life, and of worldly things, was too narrow to allow of their enjoyment. The dark side of humanity was preached, and its bright side totally ignored. Philosophy and religion both taught the same. They were, however, not altogether wrong. The selfish aggression of those making material progress in those days, and especially their self-indulgence, gave birth to such notions ; and so austere ascetic exercises, and the monastic life, became the best religion. Salvation lay in total renunciation, and mendicancy arose in

1 Al-Qur-án, lxxiv. 48.
2 *Ibid.* xiii. 11.
3 *Ibid.* ii. 286.
4 *Ibid.* xcix. 7, 8.

consequence. Could material progress thrive under these conditions? Islam came in time, and changed the trend of things. Monasticism was denounced and mendicancy prohibited. Enjoyment of worldly things was recommended, but on guarded lines: "Say: Who has prohibited the embellishment of Allah which He has brought forth for His servants, and the good provision? These are for the believers . . . in this life."[1] What a sound logic! For to depreciate God's good provision is to find fault with His work. The earth and its contents must have some use, but they could not be created to pamper self-indulgence, or further aggressiveness. Tyranny and autocracy rule the world, no doubt, from time to time, but only for a short time. The rule of the people must go, under Qur-ánic decree,[2] to those who rule for the benefit of the governed, and who do not weaken the subject[3] races, while strengthening their own people for their own ends. "The good provisions" of the world are for the servants of the Beneficent God, who, as Al-Qur-án describes them, "walk on the earth humbly and keep in their wealth a fixed portion for him who begs or is deprived (like the dumb animal). And when they spend they are neither extravagant nor parsimonious, but keep the just mean; they do not call upon another God with Allah; and slay not the soul forbidden by

1 Al-Qur-án, vii. 32.
2 *Ibid.* lxvii. 1, 2, 3.
3 *Ibid.* xxviii. 4.

Him. They observe continence and commit no fornication; they bear not false witness, and are upright in their testimony. They are faithful to their trust and their covenants," whether in national affairs or in private life. "When they pass by what is vain, they pass by nobly. They are constant at their prayers and pass their nights prostrating themselves before their Lord. They keep a guard on their prayers" (*i.e.*, they work it out in their daily life). "They accept the truth of the Judgment Day, and are fearful of the chastisement of the Lord. When they are reminded of their Lord's communications, they do not fall down thereat, deaf and blind, but say, 'Our Lord, grant us in our wives and offspring the joy of our eyes, and make us guides to those who seek righteousness.' Our Lord, grant us good in the hereafter. Lord, do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake . . . Our Lord, do not impose upon us that which we cannot bear; pardon us and grant us protection, forgive our fault and cover our evil deeds and make us die with the righteous people." "These shall be rewarded with high places because the were patient, and shall be in gardens honoured."[1]

1 Al Qur-án, xxv. 63-75; ii 201, 286: iii. 192.